stated that the most serious feature in the situation was that we were not building ships nor obtaining the use of interned or captured enemy ships rapidly enough to make good our losses.

Then a discussion was initiated by Mr. Bonar Law and myself on the question of the possibility of establishing a convoy system. Sir John Jellicoe's answer was that he did not approve of convoys " as they offered too big a target." In the course of further discussions on the subject, in reply to Mr. Bonar Law, Admiral Sir Henry Oliver said that they convoyed in the Mediterranean, so did the French and the Italians ; but that they found it did not do to send more than one ship at a time under escort. The French had tried more, and lost two or three of their ships.

I then suggested a dozen ships being convoyed by three ships-of-war. Sir John Jellicoe said in reply that *they would never be able to keep merchant Nature of ships sufficiently together to enable a few the objections destroyers to screen them. It was different with warships, which they could keep in a lock-up formation.* Mr. Runciman added that, *looking at the principle of convoy from the point of view of tonnage, it was most wasteful.* There was no advantage in speed, as a convoy must move at a pace regulated by the slowest ship.*

Here is the official minute of the

decision come to
by that War Committee in spite of the protests
entered by Mr. Bonar Law and myself:—

" It was pointed out by the naval experts that the
measures which had hitherto proved comparatively

* Henry Newbolt, " Naval Operations," Vol. V, pp. 3 and 4.